

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. In the Office Action dated December 14, 2007, claims 1-29 were rejected. In the present response, Applicants amend claims 1-4, 8, 9, and 11-20, cancel claims 21-29 and traverse the rejections as follows.

Applicants' representative would like to thank the Examiner for a telephonic interview conducted on February 25, 2008. In the interview, claim 1, as presented herein, was discussed, as well as reference EP 1 241 890. The Examiner agreed that the reference does not disclose *"receiving first login information from a first user of the multi-user computer by an instant messaging system; receiving second login information from a second user of the multi-user computer by the instant messaging system while the first user is logged in"* as now claimed.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Rejection of Claims 1-29 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1-29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over European Patent Application No. EP 1 241 890 to Thomas in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0054735 to Daniel *et al.* It was alleged that Thomas teaches providing plural concurrent instant message user logins on a multi-user computer (paragraph 0143, paragraph 0142 and paragraph 0180), one of the plural concurrent instant message user logins being a registered buddy of a user of a second computer (page 29, paragraph 0200). It was further alleged that Thomas teaches providing to the second computer an indication that the registered buddy is one of plural concurrent instant message user logins on a multi-user computer (paragraph 0200, *user only receives chat request from people on his buddy list*). However, it was admitted that Thomas fails to explicitly teach that at least one of the plural concurrent logins is by a first user and at least one of the plural concurrent logins is by a second user. It was further alleged that Daniel *et al* teaches this feature in paragraphs 0009 and 0057 (a first IM session is initiated with a first contact having a first IM account, while a second IM session is initiated with a second contact having a second IM account). Finally, it was alleged that one skilled in the art would combine these references to obviate Applicants' claimed subject matter.

Applicants have amended the claims to more clearly define the subject matter to which Applicants are entitled. Applicants believe that the amended claims do not enlarge or diminish the scope of the previous claims. The amendments were introduced solely for clarity.

For example, claim 1 now reads:

1. A method for allowing instant messaging between a multi-user computer and an instant messaging device, comprising the steps of:
receiving first login information from a first user of the multi-user computer by an instant messaging system;
receiving second login information from a second user of the multi-user computer by the instant messaging system while the first user is logged in;
providing an indication to the instant messaging device that the first user and the second user are logged into the instant message system together through the multi-user computer.

It was alleged that Thomas teaches providing “plural concurrent instant message user logins” on a multi-user computer in paragraph 0143, paragraph 0142 and paragraph 0180. The term “plural concurrent instant message user logins” has been replaced with equivalent language: *“receiving first login information from a first user of the multi-user computer by an instant messaging system; and receiving second login information from a second user of the multi-user computer by the instant messaging system while the first user is logged in”*. Thomas fails to teach this feature. Thomas teaches a television chat system that allows *a single user* to join one or more chat groups for discussing a television show that is being shown to users who are registered in the chat group(s). Thomas does not teach *multiple* users logging onto a chat group at a *single*, multi-use computer, as claimed by Applicants. Thomas only teaches the usual way of logging onto a chat session: a single user logs onto a chat session from a computer. Multiple other users are logging into the chat system from their own, respective computers, not through a single, multi-user computer.

It was alleged that Thomas teaches this feature in paragraphs 0142, 0143, and 0180. In paragraph 0142, Thomas teaches the television chat system whereby a user (in the case Mom) can “loggin” to the system by selecting a user profile that was previously set up. Paragraph 0142

then discusses a second user and how that second user can set up a profile for him/her self. At no point in this paragraph is it taught that two users can log onto the chat system at the same time.

Similarly, paragraph 0143 fails to teach multi-user logons originating from a single, multi-user computer, as claimed by Applicants. Paragraph 0143 simply teaches a program guide that allows a user to enter information identifying other users of the chat system. The other users are referred to as “non-household users”. Again, there is no discussion of allowing multiple users of the chat system to log onto the chat system through a single, multi-use computer.

In paragraph 0180, Thomas simply teaches that a user of the television chat system can join multiple chat groups to discuss the television programs currently airing. Again, this cannot be construed to allowing multiple logons to a chat system through a single, multi-use computer.

It was alleged that Daniel et al. teaches plural, concurrent multi-user logons from a single, multi-use computer. Specifically, it was alleged that Daniel et al. teaches a first IM session involving a first user and a second IM session involving a second user in paragraphs 0009 and 0057. These two paragraphs describe a system for retrieving email and IM messages by a user from multiple sources. Further details of the system can be found in paragraphs 0055 and 0056, which describes a “tray manager” to log into a user’s various email accounts (ie., Yahoo, Microsoft, Hotmail, etc.) and provide all of the email messages to the user without having to log onto each service separately. The same method is described with respect to Instant Messages from different services (ie., Yahoo, Microsoft, AOL, etc). Therefore, Daniel et al. teaches an entity (the tray manager) that logs onto multiple accounts held by a single user. This in no way resembles multiple users logging onto an Instant Messaging system through a single, multi-user computer.

Neither Thomas nor Daniel et al. teach the basic features of Applicants claims (Applicants’ only other independent claim, claim 11, contains the same features as claim 1). Therefore, the rejection to all independent claims, and all claims dependent therefrom, should be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [MSFTP666US].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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